



Early Postsecondary Opportunity Week

EPSO Week Implementation Guide

Tennessee Department of Education | Office of Early Postsecondary | October 2016

A Note from the Director

On behalf of the Tennessee Department of Education, thank you for hosting an Early Postsecondary Opportunity Week (EPSO) event during the week of October 17-21 at your school! The goal of EPSO Week is to increase awareness of and enrollment in EPSOs for students across the state. EPSO Week will serve as a platform for districts to highlight opportunities for students to earn college credit and certificates while in high school.

Research has shown that students who participate in early postsecondary courses are more likely to enroll and remain in postsecondary. Early postsecondary opportunities allow students to:

- Earn postsecondary credits while in high school,
- Become familiar with postsecondary expectations,
- Develop confidence and skills for success in postsecondary,
- Make informed postsecondary and career decisions, and
- Decrease the time and cost of completing a certificate or degree.

This year, we challenge you to begin thinking about how you can incorporate early postsecondary opportunities into your high schools. Specifically, how can you offer a portfolio of options that does not limit itself to certain groups of students, but is available to all students? EPSO Week can serve as a time to reflect on the preceding year, a time to celebrate your current EPSOs, and a time to reflect on how to expand and promote early postsecondary opportunities to all ready students in your school.

While the focus of EPSO Week is particularly on high school students, we encourage middle and elementary schools to include activities throughout the week that highlight the importance of Early Postsecondary Opportunities.

If you have any questions or concerns about planning and implementing EPSO Week at your school, please contact Jarrod Lockhart, Program Manager for the Office of Early Postsecondary, at Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov. We will keep you updated regarding any changes or additional information you may find useful. Thank you in advance for your dedication and commitment to Tennessee students!

Sincerely,



Patrice Watson
Director of Early Postsecondary, Tennessee Department of Education

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Section 1: Planning Your EPSO Week

EPSO Week has the potential to be the most exciting and motivating weeks of the academic year, and the possibilities are endless! We hope to support you in your efforts to expand and promote early postsecondary opportunities for your students. With proper planning, event promotion, and out-of-the box ideas, your EPSO Week will properly prepare students for postsecondary, career, and beyond.

As you begin to plan EPSO Week at your school, think about the needs and goals of your school. Then begin working with your administrators and teachers to plan an event that works best for your school and students. Regardless of what format your EPSO Week takes, the following pages will provide you with a checklist that can be geared to your specific event, a page of helpful reminders for the day of your event, and tools to use throughout the week.

Students who participate in early postsecondary courses are more likely to enroll and persist in college.

In This Section

- Event Coordinator Checklist
- Event Day Reminders
- Event Sign-in Sheet
- Reporting Procedures
- Data Reporting Requirements

EPSO Week Coordinator

Getting Started

- ☐ Review this Implementation Guide and contact Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov if you have questions.
- ☐ Follow the Office of Early Postsecondary on Twitter.
- ☐ If applicable, start reserving space for your event(s).
- ☐ Notify teachers, counselors, and other school administrators (principal, athletic director, etc.) of your plans.

Recruiting Support

- ☐ Recruit volunteers. Reach out to school staff and teachers to volunteer.
- ☐ Contact local colleges to invite admissions staff and faculty to volunteer during EPSO Week.
- ☐ Reach out to local community organizations and parents to volunteer.
- ☐ Encourage all teachers to plan EPSO Week-related activities.
- ☐ Solicit door prizes from community supporters.
- ☐ Confirm attendance of all volunteers. Remind them of the time and place of your event and any other important information.
- ☐ Remind teachers, counselors and administrators of the day's schedule and planned activities. Ask them to wear college-related clothing on event day and decorate their classrooms with "college and career-going culture" materials.

Promoting Your Event

- ☐ Send a press release to local newspapers and TV stations announcing the event. This is a good way to ensure volunteer and community support.
- ☐ Reach out to parents about the event to help them prepare students.

Reminders for During Your Event(s)

- Reserve the appropriate space(s) where you plan to host events for the week.
- Post/place the following information in your school's counseling office or classrooms.
 - College Board Brochures/Posters
 - Myths and Facts for each EPSO
 - EPSO Posters/Fliers
- Have parents sign in as they arrive to the school-sponsored Parent Night. Refer to the sample sign-in sheet that is included in this guide on page 8.
- Encourage students to post the "Got Credit" EPSO Week slogan on their social media pages and to share events/stories about EPSOs on Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag **#EPSOWeekTN**. Create your own school-specific EPSO Week hashtag to add to the excitement.
- Distribute the EPSO poster for students to reference during and after the EPSO Week.
- Distribute information about the EPSO logo contest to teachers, parents, and students.
- Distribute the "Got Credit" stickers to students who are currently taking advantage of EPSOs and those students who are interested in learning more about EPSOs.
- Make sure you fill out the Data Reporting Requirement form (see pages 10-11)

Sign in Sheet



Name

Date

Event Name

School _____

EPSO Week Coordinator _____

Reporting Procedures

It is our goal to ensure that Early Postsecondary Opportunity Week improves and expands each year. Collecting feedback and result data is an important part of accomplishing this goal. Please review the Data Reporting Requirements found on the following page.

As you plan your event, ensure that you track the information listed. You will need to keep track of the number of students who participate in each event. EPSO Week coordinators will receive a link to an online reporting form via email. Reporting forms should be completed no later than **Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2016**.

If you are unable to complete the online reporting form, you may email the form on the following page to Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov.



Data Reporting Requirements

Thank you for participating in the 2016 EPSO Week. Please track the following data items to help us improve this initiative and better serve you in the future. During EPSO Week, the EPSO Week Coordinator will receive a link to an online version of this form, or they can email this form to Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov.

Your Name:

Your School:

District Name:

School Name:

Early Postsecondary Opportunities Week

How many students attend your school?

How many students at your school participated in EPSO Week?

How many students are interested in taking early postsecondary courses next year?

Do you plan on hosting an EPSO Week at your school next year? **(Please circle one answer below.)**

Yes No

How helpful was EPSO Week in increasing awareness of and enrollment in early postsecondary opportunities for your school?

(Please circle one answer below. 1 = Not At All Helpful; 5= Very Helpful.)

1 2 3 4 5

If you have any further comments about this initiative or suggestions of how to improve EPSO Week, please write them below.

Please share any best practices from successful events or activities that your site held during EPSO Week.

Section 2: Getting Support for Your EPSO Week Events

As you may know, the success of your EPSO Week depends not only on your school, but community support and buy-in as well. Engaging your community in the planning and implementation process will create the excitement needed to make your EPSO Week event(s) successful.

The following pages will provide you with ideas for engaging students, school faculty, and members of the community, including a volunteer resource guide that will help you to prepare your volunteers for event day.

Students can earn postsecondary credit while in high school, and decrease the time and cost of completing a certificate or degree.

In This Section

- Who to Involve
- Volunteer Resource Guide
- Volunteer Quick Guide to EPSO Week
- Sample Volunteer Recruitment Email/Letter
- Sample Sponsorship Request Letter

Who to Involve

Students

- Recruit students to help implement EPSO Week. Identify student leaders who would love to bring their own ideas to the table.
- Select “student ambassadors” and educate them on the purpose of EPSO Week. Ask them to share implementation ideas and distribute materials.
- Ask students to promote EPSO Week through their social media accounts. They can use the hashtag **#EPSOWeekTN** to share events and stories about EPSOs on Twitter and Instagram.

Teachers

- Teachers are key to motivating student to pursue postsecondary. We recommend enlisting their help to make your school’s EPSO Week a huge success.
- Ask teachers to take time during EPSO Week to talk to each of their classes about the available EPSOs in your school, why EPSOs are so important, and how students can take advantage of these opportunities.
- Provide teachers with the EPSO Descriptions on pages 21-23 to assist them with the conversation around EPSOs.
- Have teachers recruit “student ambassadors” to help decorate the school, distribute EPSO Week materials, and encourage their friends to participate in EPSO Week.
- Ask teachers to dedicate at least one class during EPSO Week to have students write about the importance of taking college-preparatory classes in high school. How will this benefit the student (financially, academically, etc.)? Students’ reflections can aid in guiding the conversation for this activity. Teachers can also incorporate the stories of students who have taken advantage of early postsecondary opportunities and have them speak about their experience/benefits.

Volunteers and Community Representatives

Volunteer and community involvement is crucial to the success of your event. Identify contacts in your community that may be interested in helping make your EPSO Week a success by donating time and/or resources. Some examples may include:

- School Alumni
- Students' families, PTA, School Improvement Council
- Your school's athletic department and coaches
- Retired educators
- Volunteer, senior, or church groups
- Community college, Technical college, and university representatives and faculty
- Business, community, and political leaders
- Youth programs (e.g., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, 4H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts)
- College access organizations in your school or community
- Career and Technical Education Student Organizations (DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, FFA, HOSA, SkillsUSA, and TSA)

Provide teachers with the information sheet on (pages 21-23) so they can review prior to EPSO Week. Send all potential volunteers and/or groups an EPSO Week recruitment letter with an event explanation and details. Ask volunteers to post the "Got Credit" EPSO Week slogan on their social media pages. We'll have it posted on Twitter and Instagram. Encourage them to share events/stories about EPSOs on Twitter and Instagram with the hashtag **#EPSOWeekTN**.

Volunteer Resource Guide

The success of your Early Postsecondary Opportunity Week is dependent upon the strength of your volunteer recruits. Therefore, it is essential to recruit volunteers to ensure the success of your program. Below is a guide you can follow to ensure you have a well-informed and efficient volunteer support.

Inform Your Volunteers

Once you have recruited and finalized your volunteer roster for EPSO Week, you will need to inform them of the event details. You can use the template on the next page as a guide.

Provide Options

Volunteer opportunities can range from greeting students to educating them on available early postsecondary opportunities. Below is a list of possible opportunities. Add in your event specific needs and use this as a tool to help volunteers choose a task.

- Greet students
- Sign in students
- Sign in parents
- Assist students with understanding available early postsecondary opportunities
- Distribute information about EPSOs to parents and students
- Assist students with understanding how to sign up for early postsecondary opportunities at your school
- Talk to parents about the benefit of EPSOs for students

Identify Your Volunteers

Help identify your volunteers as a source of help for students by providing name badges for volunteers on the day of the event.

Train Your Volunteers

On the morning of the event, conduct a quick orientation to familiarize volunteers with details of your event. Consider walking them through the definition of each early postsecondary opportunity, as well as the EPSOs available in your school. Be sure to print a copy of the “Quick Guide” form on pages 21-23.

Thank Your Volunteers

Send a thank-you letter to all volunteers for their dedication to EPSO Week. Handwrite a note to each volunteer. You may also want to give students the opportunity to thank the volunteers as well.

Volunteer Quick Guide

Welcome to Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) Week! We appreciate your hard work and dedication to increasing awareness of early postsecondary opportunities for students and parents. Use this reference guide to familiarize yourself with the details of our EPSO Week initiatives.

What is EPSO Week?

EPSO Week is a statewide event sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Education. EPSOs provide students with the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school, develop the confidence and skills necessary for success in postsecondary, make informed postsecondary and career decisions, and decrease the time and cost of completing a certificate of degree. Opportunities that help to support this culture of college and career readiness for all TN students include the following: Advanced Placement, Cambridge, College Level Examination Programs, Dual Enrollment, Industry Certification, International Baccalaureate, Local Dual Credit, and Statewide Dual Credit.

What is the goal of EPSO Week?

Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) Week will consist of a suite of events, designed to increase awareness of and enrollment in EPSOs for students across the state. EPSO week will serve as a platform for schools and districts to highlight opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit and certificates while in high school. We challenge all districts in Tennessee to continue thinking about how to incorporate and grow a portfolio of early postsecondary opportunities that are available to all students.

How do I address questions about available Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs) in Tennessee?

The EPSO Week Coordinator will provide you with a poster that highlights all available EPSOs across the state. He/she will also inform you of the EPSOs available at the high school, as offerings may vary across districts/schools. Your goal is to make students/parents aware of what is available at their school and how these opportunities can better prepare them for college and career.

What are the next steps for students?

In an effort to increase awareness of EPSOs for all students, use the “Quick Guide” on pages 21-23 to discuss available opportunities across the state and at the local high school. Work with students to identify what opportunity they are interested in learning more about. Once an EPSO(s) is identified have them sign the “Got Credit” form (see page 35) that will be provided at each event. A teacher or

counselor will reach out to the student directly to discuss any next steps and determine if the selected EPSO or an additional opportunity is right for them. Student placement decisions should be based on, but not limited to the following:

- student interest and pathway
- student postsecondary aspirations
- student knowledge, skills and abilities
- student support needs (financial, access, transportation, etc.)

Sample Volunteer Recruitment Letter

Update the bracketed portions with your school's information and relevant event details

[SCHOOL LOGO]

[SCHOOL ADDRESS]

Dear [CONTACT AT ORGANIZATION],

[SCHOOL] is excited to announce its participation in the statewide Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) Week, Oct. 17-21. Along with schools across the state that week, we will strive to increase awareness and enrollment in EPSO's for our students. Research shows that students who participate in EPSO's not only earn college credit and industry certifications while in high school, but are also more likely to enroll and persist in postsecondary programs. Given [ORGANIZATION]'s position within our community, we hope you will be able to volunteer and participate in our **EPSO Family Night** on **[DATE]**, from **[TIME RANGE]**.

Counselors, teachers, and administrators will be on hand at the Family Night to present on each of our opportunities and answer any questions. However with your help, we can make this a true community-wide endeavor. Together with local employers and organizations such as [ORGANIZATION], we can show our students and families how EPSO's help our community thrive.

How can you help?

Volunteers can greet and sign in students, distribute materials, and connect families with the various resources present. In addition to the Family Night, our EPSO Week activities will include [LIST OF OTHER ACTIVITIES]. If you are interested in helping with any of these, or would like to learn more about how your employer or community group can participate, please contact **[NAME, TITLE]** at **[PHONE, or EMAIL]**.



Even if you are not able to attend, we encourage you to follow the activities and join the conversations at [SCHOOL] and across the state with the hashtag **#EPSOWeekTN**.

Thank you in advance for supporting our students and this exciting initiative to encourage EPSO awareness and enrollment for all of Tennessee's students!

Sincerely,

[COUNSELOR/PRINCIPAL/EVENT COORDINATOR]

Resources

EPSOs provide students with the opportunity to earn college credit while in high school, develop the confidence and skills necessary for success in postsecondary, make informed postsecondary and career decisions, and decrease the time and cost of completing a certificate or degree. Opportunities that help to support this culture of college and career readiness for all Tennessee students include the following: Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge, College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Dual Enrollment, Industry Certification, International Baccalaureate (IB), Local Dual Credit, and Statewide Dual Credit.

EPSOs are just one piece of the postsecondary preparation process. The following information can help you learn more about the college application process and assist seniors, specifically, with their college preparation journey. Use the resources below in combination with your EPSO Week events.

Important Dates for High School Seniors

- TN Promise Application Deadline: Nov. 1
- FAFSA Application Opens: Oct. 1
- *FAFSA form must be submitted by Jan. 17 to meet TN Promise eligibility requirements*

Items for Students to Prepare for Postsecondary Admissions and Scholarship Applications

- Personal and educational data (e.g., name, address, high schools attended, college credits earned, parental information, high school plan of study, standardized test scores)
- Honors and awards
- Extracurricular, personal, and volunteer activities
- Employment, internships, and summer activities

Online resources

Early Postsecondary Opportunities in Tennessee

Visit <http://tn.gov/education/section/early-postsecondary> to learn about the eight different early postsecondary opportunities promoted and recognized in the state of Tennessee.

CollegeforTN.org

CollegeforTN.org is a free online web portal that provides Tennessee students and families with resources to research and organize the college and career search process. The portal offers lots of information on college applications.

FAFSA.ed.gov

FAFSA.ed.gov is the official site at which students file the FAFSA. Filing the FAFSA is always free any website that asks students to pay to file the FAFSA is not the official Federal Student Aid site. Students can file the 2017-18 FAFSA beginning October 1. During Early Postsecondary Week, they can register for a FAFSA ID, which they will need to file the FAFSA at www.fsaidth.gov.

ACT.org

Students can register for the ACT on ACT.org or they can visit the website to retrieve their scores and have those scores sent to schools.

CollegeBoard.org

Students can register for the SAT on collegeboard.org or they can visit the website to retrieve their scores and have those scores sent to schools.

Quick Guide: Early Postsecondary Opportunities

Advanced Placement (AP)	
Description	Provides an opportunity for high school students to experience postsecondary-level coursework across multiple subjects. Each course is aligned to a subject-specific AP exam, which provides students the potential to earn credit for postsecondary coursework in that subject.
Structure	Course and Exam
Provider	The College Board
Cambridge (CIE)	
Description	Provides internationally recognized academic programs for students age 5 to 19. The high school A and AS Level courses, available only through approved Cambridge International Schools, provide students the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit that is accepted by colleges in the U.S. and abroad.
Structure	Course and Exam
Provider	Cambridge International Examinations
College Level Exam Program (CLEP)	
Description	Exams are used to assess mastery of postsecondary-level material acquired in a variety of ways—through general academic instructions, significant independent study or extracurricular work. Students can earn credit for postsecondary coursework in a specific subject.
Structure	Exam
Provider	The College Board

Dual Enrollment (DE)	
Description	Postsecondary course taught by postsecondary faculty or credentialed adjunct faculty. Students are enrolled at the postsecondary institution and earn postsecondary credit upon completion of the course.
Structure	Course
Provider	Individual Tennessee Postsecondary Institutions
International Baccalaureate (IB)	
Description	The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, available only through an approved IB World School, provides high school students the opportunity to take a rigorous, pre-university course of studies. IB courses are aligned to internationally-benchmarked exams which provide opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit while still in high school.
Structure	Course and Exam
Provider	International Baccalaureate Organization
Local Dual Credit	
Description	High school course aligned to a local postsecondary institution's course and exam. Students who pass the exam earn credits that are accepted and/or recognized by the local postsecondary institution.
Structure	Course and Exam
Provider	Individual Tennessee Postsecondary Institutions
Statewide Dual Credit	
Description	High school course aligned to Tennessee postsecondary standards and challenge exam, developed by Tennessee secondary and postsecondary faculty. Student who pass the exam earn credits that are accepted by all Tennessee public postsecondary.

Structure	Course and Exam
Provider	Tennessee Department of Education
Industry Certifications	
Description	Earned through secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs and courses. High school students are encouraged to focus their elective credits on robust, career-aligned learning pathways. Robust learning pathways should culminate with the achievement of nationally recognized industry certifications; meaningful work based learning experiences, and/or attainment of postsecondary credit hours through early postsecondary opportunities.
Structure	Exam
Provider	Industry

Section 3: Promoting Your Event

Promoting your school's EPSO Week is crucial. A truly successful event has the entire school community actively engaged. In the following pages, you'll find ideas and sample activities you can use to promote the event to all those involved both within your school community and outside the walls of your school.

In This Section

- In-School Promotion Ideas
- Promoting EPSO Week to the Media
- Sample Press Release
- Sample Student/Family Letter
- Got Credit? Sign-Up Form

All high schools in Tennessee should provide a portfolio of early postsecondary opportunities for students, addressing a diversity of student interest, academic performance, and need.

In-School Promotion Ideas

Morning Announcement Script

Use daily public announcements to generate awareness of EPSO Week. Try this sample message!

This is Early Postsecondary Opportunity Week! If you haven't heard about early postsecondary opportunities, this is the week to learn more. Visit your school counselor to learn more about early postsecondary opportunities or ask a teacher about the benefits of taking a college-level course while in high school.

"Got Credit?" Stickers

Give a "Got Credit?" sticker to students who are already taking advantage of EPSOs or students that signed the "Got Credit" form to learn more about the EPSO that is right for them. As you know, Tennessee early postsecondary opportunities allow students to earn postsecondary credit while in high school, which decreases the time and cost for completing a certificate and/or degree. This sticker sparks the conversation between students to discuss the benefits of obtaining credit by taking advantage of early postsecondary opportunities.

Friendly Competition

Sponsor a class contest between the different grades to inspire all students to start thinking about taking rigorous college-level courses while in high school. Classes compete against each other to have the most students taking action. Taking action could include: scheduling an appointment to speak with their counselor, asking their teachers questions about EPSOs, signing up to take a rigorous college-course, inviting their parents and/or guardian to the EPSO Week "Parent Night". Keep a record on your school website or Facebook page.

EPSO Logo Contest

Encourage students to enter the EPSO Logo Design Contest. The EPSO logo design winner will be recognized during EPSO Week with a surprise visit from the Tennessee Department of Education staff. The student and school will receive statewide recognition, as the winning logo will be the logo associated with EPSO Week and featured on our website, social media platforms, and other marketing materials.

Host a Pep Rally

Talk with your school administrators about holding a kick-off pep rally to get everyone in the EPSO frame of mind. Introduce students already taking advantage of EPSO in your school or invite an alumnus back to talk about how taking EPSOs better prepared them for postsecondary. Ask students to wear college gear from their favorite schools.

Daily EPSO Trivia Announcements

During EPSO Week, make daily announcements with EPSO Trivia or facts. If you do a trivia question, offer a small prize for the first student to turn in the correct answer. Use pages 21-23 as a start for your facts.

College Tour

Reach out to your local Tennessee College of Applied Technology, Community College, or a 4-year postsecondary institution in your area to request a tour of the campus for your students. Please have the assigned tour guide talk about general information related to their campus, including the majors, offered, admission requirements, application process, and cost.

Invite Guest Speakers

Invite admissions staff from local colleges and universities to provide general information related to their campus, including the majors offered, admission requirements, application process, and cost of attendance. Have them talk to students about the benefits of taking EPSOs while in high school and how EPSOs transfer over to their postsecondary institution.

Give Away College “Swag”

Hold drawings during EPSO Week. Ask colleges and universities to donate promotional items (banners, hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc.) to use as giveaways during your event. Also, ask local businesses for items for your drawing.

Dress the School

Create an “EPSO Wall”. Use the EPSO Week theme “Got Credit?” as the title of your wall(s). Enlist the help of your student ambassadors or art students to create a wall that list the names and definitions of each EPSO. You may also want to collect the essay responses from students and post them on the “EPSO Wall” as well (see page 13).

Family Night

Host an EPSO Family Night at your school. Invite admission staff from local colleges and universities to provide general information related to their campus, including the majors offered, admission requirements, application process, and cost of attendance. Have them talk to students and families about the benefits of taking EPSOs while in high school and how EPSOs transfer over to their postsecondary institution. Ask your school counselors and volunteers to be on hand to talk to families/students individually about their interest and postsecondary aspiration. Also, have them walk families/students through each opportunity to find out which offering is right for them.

Communicate

Send letters or email reminders to all families, students, and school staff. Also, include information in the school newsletter and post fliers around the school and community about your EPSO Week event. You can use the Sample Student/Family Letter at the end of this section as a guide.

EPSO Week Logo Contest: Calling all Tennessee Students and Aspiring Artists!

The Office of Early Postsecondary (EPS) is looking for a creative and innovative logo design for Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) Week to support our mission of increasing access to and enrollment in early postsecondary opportunities for all students. The winning student and his/her school will receive statewide recognition, as the winning logo will be the official logo associated with EPSO Week and featured on our website, social media platforms, and other marketing materials.

How to Enter the Contest

Submissions will be accepted through Oct. 12, 2016. The EPSO logo design winner(s) will be recognized during EPSO Week with a surprise visit from the Tennessee Department of Education staff. In order for your entry to be submitted and reviewed by our team, students must:

- ✓ Submit a design (meeting all requirements listed below) to Early.Postsecondary@tn.gov no later than **close of business on Wednesday, Oct. 12.**
- ✓ Submit the logo in its original file. Also, submit it as a high resolution .png, .jpg or .psd (resolution of 300 dpi), **AND** as a .pdf file (less than 10MB).
- ✓ If the logo incorporates non-standard fonts, be able to provide any non-standard fonts incorporated in the logo should the design be selected.

Logo Requirements

- **Design Team:** The logo can be designed by one student or a team of students.
- **Professional:** Please keep in mind that the logo will be used on our website, social media platforms, and other mediums (pamphlets, t-shirts, etc.). While we encourage creativity, the logo must still be legible.
- **Theme:** The logo must promote the mission of the Office of Early Postsecondary: *to increase access to and enrollment in early postsecondary opportunities for all students*. The design should include “EPSO Week” and be universal in theme/design. It should not be specific to any school and/or region.
- **Color:** There are no limitations and any colors may be used. However, logo must be legible and visually appealing in color and in black and white.
- **Integrity:** Copyrighted materials are forbidden when designing the logo. It must be an original design created by the student/team. Logos and licensed images that have been previously

published cannot be used within the design of the logo. It must be easily reproducible and scalable for large and small formatting.

Prize

The student and school will receive statewide recognition, as the winning logo will be the official logo associated with EPSO Week and featured on our website, social media platforms, and other marketing materials. The EPSO logo design winner(s) will be recognized during EPSO Week with a surprise visit from Tennessee Department of Education staff members.

Contest Details and Disclaimer

Winners will be selected by a team with the Tennessee Department of Education, Office of Student Readiness and Early Postsecondary. Upon submission, contestants must agree that the department may publish their logo, name(s), and school/district name as part of future advertising campaigns and/or marketing materials. Contestants assign all ownership rights, including all intellectual property rights to the logo, to the Tennessee Department of Education. Additionally, the department may alter, modify, or revise the logo as necessary to achieve the goals of EPSO Week. The department reserves the right to not select a winner if, in its sole discretion, no suitable entries are received.

Promoting EPSO Week to the Media

Inviting local media to your EPSO Week is a great way to increase public awareness of your school's activities and promotion of early postsecondary opportunities. Here are some tips for contacting the media:

Write a press release: Write a brief press release with information about your EPSO Week events and activities.

Distribute the press release: Send out the press release to your local media outlets before, during, or just after your EPSO Week event.

If you email a copy of the press release, send the release directly in the body of your email. This will help your email avoid spam filters. If you can, send the email from an address linked to a person's name (rather than a general organizational mailbox). An email from Jarrod.Lockhart@tn.gov is more likely to be read than an email from EPSOTN@tn.gov.

***Tip:** If you or someone on staff at your school has a relationship with the media or a specific reporter, have that person reach out and/or follow up with the media. Also try reaching out to reporters who have covered your school(s) previously.*

Follow up once you send the press release: Once you have sent the press release, follow up by phone to make sure the newsroom received the press release. Prepare a small script ahead of time with the most important information. Prepare to be brief on the phone, newsrooms and reporters are usually busy and being prepared when you speak to them will help you keep their attention.

Designate a media point-of-contact: Choose someone involved with EPSO Week to be the point person for any members of the media who may attend. The media point-of-contact should be prepared to greet anyone from the media who attends any EPSO Week events and direct them to students, faculty, or anyone else willing to be interviewed for a news piece.

Follow up the day before any big events: The day before any big EPSO Week events (or the Friday before), follow up with your media targets by phone or email to remind them of the event and confirm their attendance, and give them contact information for your designated media point-of-contact.

During EPSO Week Events: Make sure parking is available for any media and that your school's front office is aware that media may be arriving.

Ensure that your media point-of-contact is prepared to answer basic questions about your EPSO Week events, including the events and activities your school is hosting, the number of juniors and seniors at your school, and your most recent college-going rates.

Try to get contact information from any media that attend so you have their contact information for future events/announcements and to send a follow-up thank you.

Send a thank you: Send thank you notes to members of the media that attend your event. This will help to maintain a good relationship with your local media outlets.

Sample Press Release

Send this sample press release to local news organizations. Update the bold pieces with your school's event information and add any other relevant event details.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, please contact:

Name:

Phone:

Email Address:

School Name Hosts Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) Week

CITY, TN (DATE) - In an effort to increase awareness of and enrollment in Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs), **Name of Your High School** will participate in EPSO Week. EPSO week serves as a platform for schools and districts to highlight opportunities for students to earn college credit and industry certificates while in high school. Research has shown that students who participate in early postsecondary opportunities are more likely to enroll and persist in postsecondary.

Name of Your High School will offer college-focused activities for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors. While the focus of EPSO Week is particularly on high school students, we are also encouraging middle and elementary schools to include activities throughout the week that highlight the importance of EPSOs.

Name of Event Coordinator, EPSO Week Coordinator for **Name of Your High School**, is expecting more than **Insert Number** students to participate with the help of **Insert Number** volunteers from **Insert names of School Faculty/Administration/College/Community Resources that will help.**

For more information about the **Name of Your High School** EPSO Week event, please contact **Name of Event Coordinator and contact information**

Sample Family Night Letter

Update the bracketed portions with your school's information and relevant event details

[SCHOOL LOGO]

[SCHOOL ADDRESS]

Dear Students and Families,

The Tennessee Department of Education has designated Oct. 17-21 Early Postsecondary Opportunity (EPSO) Week, and as part of our effort at [SCHOOL] to increase awareness and enrollment in EPSO's, we invite you to attend our **EPSO Family Night** on [DATE], from [TIME RANGE].

Got Credit?

Research shows that students who participate in EPSOs not only earn college credit and industry certifications while in high school, but are also more likely to enroll and persist in postsecondary programs. Your student can access a number of these opportunities at [SCHOOL], including:

[LIST EPSO'S CURRENTLY OFFERED]

Want to Learn More?



We encourage you to come by on [DATE], where counselors, teachers, and administrators will be on hand to present on each of our opportunities and answer any questions. We look to also have employers and community organizations present to share their perspective on how increased postsecondary attainment can shape our community. In addition to the Family Night, our activities that week will include [LIST OF OTHER ACTIVITIES]. If you are interested in volunteering or would like to learn more about how your employer or community group can participate, please contact [NAME, TITLE] at [PHONE, or EMAIL]. Even if you are not able to attend, follow the activities at [SCHOOL] and across the state with the hashtag **#EPSOWeekTN**.

Thank you in advance for supporting your student and this exciting initiative to encourage EPSO awareness and enrollment for all of Tennessee's students!

Sincerely,

[COUNSELOR/PRINCIPAL/EVENT COORDINATOR]

Social Media Campaign

<i>Follow and tag:</i>	<i>Use hashtags</i>
 @TN_EPSO	#EPSOWEEKTN
 @TN_EPSO	#EPSOWEEKTN

Got Credit?



First Name	Last Name	Grade Level	Are you currently enrolled in an EPSO class this semester? If yes, which one?	What EPSO(s) are you interested in learning more about?
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	
			Yes or No	

Section 4: Hosting Your EPSO Week

This section guides you through activities that your school can host during EPSO Week. Whether you work in a high school, middle school, or an elementary school, EPSO Week has something to offer for each student not just high school students interested in taking rigorous college-level courses.

Key information in this section includes activity ideas for students from elementary school through high school.

In This Section

- EPSO Week at Elementary Schools
- EPSO Week at Middle Schools
- EPSO Week Sample Timeline

EPSO Week at Elementary Schools

It is never too early to promote Early Postsecondary Opportunities (EPSOs) in your schools! Elementary school students will love the chance to learn about EPSOs and potentially interact with students at the middle or high school. Here are a few ways you can engage students in an age appropriate way.

Dress the Part

Encourage teachers and staffs to wear a t-shirt, sweatshirt, or hat from the college they attended, or have them bring in their college yearbook or other items with their college mascot to share with students. During morning meetings, have teachers spend a few minutes talking about college and available early postsecondary opportunities in Tennessee. Be sure to have teachers highlight those EPSOs in which students can take advantage of as early as middle school. Opportunities such as: Cambridge, International Baccalaureate, and Advanced Placement.

Imagine Your Dream College

Bring together art, writing and imagination with college knowledge by asking students to imagine their dream college. Ask them to think about where that college would be, what kinds of classes they'd want to take, what the dorms would be like, and even what the cafeteria is serving up for dinner! Students can write a short paragraph or even a brochure advertising their school, and can finish their project by creating a school pennant with colors, symbols and a motto that symbolize their school. Use this idea in your centers or as a whole group activity.



EPSO Week at Middle Schools

Middle schools are a great opportunity to start talking about available early postsecondary opportunities in Tennessee, as well as their college and career aspirations.

The goal of EPSO Week is to expand access to and enrollment in early postsecondary opportunities across the state. EPSO Week serves as a platform for schools, students, and parents to start thinking about early postsecondary opportunities, college, and begin planning their future.

College Day

Encourage teachers and staff to wear apparel from their alma mater. Students can wear apparel from their favorite postsecondary institution. This is a great way for teachers to start a conversation about their college experience, as well as how early postsecondary opportunities can decrease the time and cost of obtaining a degree.

Door Decorating Contest

Create college buzz with some friendly competition. Which homeroom can design the most creative EPSO themed door decoration?

Guest Speakers

Work with your local high school to recruit a high school student or school counselor to talk to students about early postsecondary opportunities, college, and career.

Teacher Involvement

Encourage teachers to take some time and share their postsecondary and early postsecondary opportunity (if applicable) experiences.

Bring College to the Middle School

Invite representatives from local colleges to talk to students about their institutions. Invite local alumni who are attending college or recently graduated to share their experiences with college. Take students on virtual college tours through the college websites.

EPSO Week Sample Timeline

Monday

- ☐ Parent Night. Invite students and parents to an early postsecondary opportunities information night and have their questions answered by school counselors, teachers, and local postsecondary representatives.

Tuesday

- ☐ Guest Speaker. Invite postsecondary admissions representatives to your school to help students learn more about their institutions.

Wednesday

- ☐ Early Postsecondary Door Decorating Contest. Encourage homerooms to decorate their doors in an EPSO theme.
- ☐ Encourage students to make notes about any EPSOs they are interested in learning more about. Have the “Got Credit” sign-in sheet located on page 35 in every classroom as well as the school counselors’ office.

Thursday

- ☐ College tour. Schedule a college tour with a postsecondary institution to help students learn more about the institution and campus.

Friday

- ☐ Postsecondary Pep Rally. Celebrate the hard work of your students and build continued excitement around more students taking advantage of EPSOs.